

The Two Standards and Three Classes of Men

December 11.....

THE TWO STANDARDS

1. OPENING PRAYER As usual: I ask the grace and help of the Lord God that all my intentions, actions and and activities will be directed purely towards an increase in my serving and praising Him.
2. COMPOSITION OF SELF: I imagine myself present at two meetings: one an assembly with Satan, the other an assembly with Jesus.
3. GRACE: I seek two graces: (a) **to recognize the strategy and deceits of the enemy of our human nature, and strength to avoid them;** (b) **to know and appreciate the way and strategy of Jesus Christ, with the courage to follow Jesus unreservedly.**
4. Composition of Place:

FIRST PART: THE STANDARD OF SATAN (This should take 10 minutes maximum)

Satan's Meeting: Satan is enthroned high above his entourage, and in a lengthy harangue he explains his strategy to them. Usually he argues smoothly and ingratiatingly, full of apparent charm and reassurances. For those who can see, the malice of his intense craving for the destruction of humanity is unmistakable. He keeps reminding his followers: "Make it look good!" For some he advises that they keep saying "Try harder."

Satan's speech to his followers is to encourage trends and biases emerging from human culture itself.

"First you are to encourage people to acquire many goods as consumerism suggests and to strive for much more income. Above all, lead men to identify themselves with what they possess and women to want to belong to someone else.

"Second move them into habits of manipulating others. Encourage humans to listen to the feelings of others, to praise and stroke them so long as this enables them to accept what you've already decided for them. Motivate them to focus on their own gifts and positions in a self-righteous way. Encourage some to make deals to gain attention and self-advancement. Encourage others to be "nice" so as to stay in relationship.

"Finally, encourage some to form cliques and factions, power groups operating behind the scenes. Counsel other to talk privately to someone with influence and not to rock the boat, nor embarrass anyone. Get them to use as their main criterion for every decision, without further reflection that they 'feel good' about it. Encourage exterior or interior anger and resentment. Emphasize that they're superior to others!"

First step then, will be riches leading to consumerism, the second, honours leading to seducing

and manipulating others, the third, pride leading to lack of respect for others. From these three Satan leads people on to all other vices.

4. (a) SIGHT: With my imagination, I see the various persons in the scene: who they are, what they look like, what they do.

4. (b) HEARING: With my imagination, I hear the sounds of the scene, the words spoken, the reactions of people, the sounds in the background.

4. (c). DEEDS: With my imagination, I note the actions of the scene: what Satan does, what his followers do.

SECOND PART: THE STANDARD OF CHRIST
(This should take 15-20 minutes)

5. Composition of Place:

Christ's Meeting: Christ is walking with his disciples: As they journey the Lord (who eats and sleeps as they do, wears similar clothing and shares all their tasks) speaks to these men and women along the way. Sometimes they ask questions or raise objections. He rejoices in their responses, and he answers each one in a different way. Throughout his teaching, however, Jesus is careful to warn his disciples about the deceptions of Satan which are concealed within secular practices and built into taken-for-granted attitudes all around them. "I'm sending you as sheep amongst wolves," he often says. And he adds: "You must be as simple as doves, but as wise as serpents." Then he urges them to trust, not in their own strength or wisdom, but in their union with himself and with the Trinity who passionately cares for them.

First Jesus recommends that the disciples attract others to follow him and seek the grace of poverty of spirit which always acknowledges our true worth. He suggest that we even experience actual poverty. With this will come freedom from consumerism and the material constraints and association with those who are poor or disadvantages.

Second Jesus urges them to attract others to a desire to be open and honest even in the face of insults and offenses, even as they show profound respect for others.

Third Jesus calls them to follow the honest, humble way of discerning love. This means being open and ready to learn so as to discover true love in relationships.

There are three steps: first, genuine spiritual and actual poverty, as opposed to consumerism and riches; second, experiences of humiliations while knowing one's true relationship with God; a profound respect for persons, as opposed to seducing and manipulating others; third, humility or a sense of one's true worth as opposed to pride and disrespect of others. From these three follow all virtues.

5 (a) SIGHT: With my imagination, I see the various persons in the scene: who they are, what they look like, what they do.

5. (b) HEARING: With my imagination, I hear the sounds of the scene, the words spoken, the reactions of people, the sounds in the background.

6. (c). DEEDS: With my imagination, I note the actions of the scene: what Our Lord does, what his followers do.

7. Colloquy

Conclude by spending five or ten minutes praying with the *Triple Dialogue*.

THE TRIPLE COLLOQUY--A DIALOGUE WITH THREE PERSONS

The First Dialogue is with Mary, the Mother of Jesus

I ask Mary to intercede for me with Jesus, her Son for the grace to be chosen and received under the Standard of Christ that I may follow Jesus more closely: first in being so entirely free from false attachments that I desire to practise even actual poverty (on condition that Christ should choose it for me); second to bear insults and contempt as I openly honour the worth of other persons out of love and so imitate Jesus more fully (without ever seeking these on purpose, and on condition that no sin on the part of others is desired). Then I will conclude with a *Hail Mary*.

The Second dialogue is with Jesus Christ, our Saviour

Then with Mary I will go to her Son, and ask Jesus that these same graces be given to me. Then I will conclude with the *Soul of Christ*.

The Third Dialogue is with the Trinity

Then with Mary and Jesus I will go the Trinity, and ask them that the same graces be given to me.

8.. Finish with an Our Father

Spend time on review of prayer & journaling.

THE THREE CLASSES OF MEN

1. OPENING PRAYER As usual: I ask the grace and help of the Lord God that all my intentions, actions and activities will be directed purely towards an increase in my serving and praising Him.

2. COMPOSITION OF SELF: I will imagine myself watching and listening to three couples who are not aware that I am watching and listening. Each of the couples has acquired quite a lot of money and quite a few possessions—sometimes in shady or questionable ways. Each couple would like to follow God and be saved, even if it means that they would have to give up their possessions.

3. **Grace: I ask for the grace: to choose the path that will most lead to the promotion of God's kingdom and my own salvation.**

4. Couple Number 1: They say that they really want to be free of all the distraction and luxury they have because of their possessions. They find that they spend so much time and energy acquiring things and then worrying about keeping them that they have little time and energy for caring for others or for developing a closer relationship with God. They talk about the importance of saving their souls but at the moment of their deaths, they are still busy with their possessions and have not taken the necessary steps to focus their lives more on serving God.

4. (a) SIGHT: With my imagination, I see the various persons in the scene: who they are, what they look like, what they do.

4. (b) HEARING: With my imagination, I hear the sounds of the scene, the words spoken.

4. (c) DEEDS: With my imagination, I note the actions of the scene: what the couple do.

5. Couple Number 2: They wish to be rid of their attachments and preoccupations which distract them from building God's kingdom but they try to do it in a way that forces God to come to them rather than they themselves coming to God. So they keep their possessions, keep on acquiring more but get involved in church activities, social action groups, prayer meetings and other activities. Their lives become filled with a blur of activity. So, even if they do accomplish some good things, they have neglected to really face the matter squarely: do I put God and His kingdom first in my life?

Then, do as in 4 (a), (b), and (c).

6. Couple Number 3: They wish to be rid of their attachments and preoccupations which distract them from building God's kingdom and they are ready to do this according to how God wants them to do it. Their whole goal is to order their lives so that their time and energy first go into knowing, loving and serving God and building his kingdom. Regarding their possessions, then, they want to be like the pointer on a balancing scale: they are ready to tilt either way, depending on what seems to better serve God. So, they decide to act like they are free from their possessions: they are ready to keep them and use them or equally to get rid of them, all depending on God's will, so that their foremost desire: to serve God and build his kingdom, determines whether they keep anything or let go of anything.

Then, do as in 4 (a), (b) and (c).

7. Do the Triple Colloquy as in the Two Standards exercise.

8. Conclude with an Our Father.

Spend time on review of prayer & journaling.

Religion 41G Called to Love, Called to Serve: The Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life
Cycle 12 December 5.....

Two Standards and Three Classes

Main

Day 1	Two Standards
Day 2	Two Standards
Day 3	Two Standards
Day 4	Repetition
Day 5	Three Classes
Day 6	Three Classes
Day 7	Repetition

The main material is the standards material. Use the Extra ONLY if you do not get the grace with the given materials.

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